



Renuntio

No nobler training exists but that which cherishes the good, the beautiful, and the true, thus producing disciples of knowledge and lovers of wisdom.

January, 2019

Volume 8 | Issue 5

COURAGE ALLOWS US TO DEFEND CIVILIZATION

The academic discipline concerned with character and right action is moral philosophy or ethics. A formal study of ethics is somewhat over the heads of younger students. Yet they can be taught to live the moral life when parents and teachers introduce them to the virtues through language, explanation, and compelling stories. The most important, or cardinal, virtues are prudence, justice, temperance, and courage, and none is more important to young people than courage.

A casual look at the world around us shows why courage is an indispensable virtue. We have much to fear. Foremost we fear death. Death comes in many forms: through accident, disease, willful murder, wars, even suicide. Hardly a day exists when we cannot pick up the local newspaper and read an account of some grisly death caused by either natural or human agency. Human beings, like other animals, possess an instinct for survival which compels them to flee death. We also fear the unknown. Consider a child. Among other definitions of childhood, it is a state of being where little is known. As a result, children fear many things. They fear the dark; they fear being left alone; they fear certain objects that are completely harmless but seem ominous. In my child-

hood home a suit of armor stood in a corner of our sitting room. I never went into that room alone. Sometimes a toddler will cry if a parent or grandparent walks into the house wearing sunglasses. Although fear of the unknown is most prevalent in childhood, adults are not wholly immune to it. After watching a scary movie late at night, adults in the safety of their warm beds will suspect almost any noise in the house. Reports of a case of head lice at a school will cause all the teachers to start scratching their own heads. Many other fears hinder our performance and our happiness. We fear losing our jobs. We fear the loss of others' esteem. We fear being laughed at. As a result, some people cringe every time a supervisor approaches them in the friendliest manner. Others are extremely reluctant to speak in public. Still others will consult nearly everyone within reach before making the most inconsequential decision. When to these fears are added other idiosyncratic phobias, such as the fear of spiders, the fear of open spaces, and the fear of heights, our world becomes virtually a haunted house in which there is far more to fear than fear itself.

(Continued on pg. 2)

THE XAVIER PROMISE

Xavier Classical Charter Schools are dedicated to providing a classical, academically rigorous, content-rich, liberal arts education, preparing students to excel in every duty and guiding them toward wisdom and virtue.

JANUARY EVENTS

- 1/7—Theater Practice—(Gr. 7/8)
3:00-5:00 p.m.
- 1/8—Theater Rehearsal—(Gr. 7/8)
3:00-5:00 p.m.
- 1/8—Little Mermaid—(Gr. 7/8)
6:30-8:00 p.m.
- 1/10—Little Mermaid—(Gr. 7/8)
6:30-8:00 p.m.
- 1/10—Dress Up Day—Pajama Day
- 1/11—Winter Showcase (Gr.9-12)
CSI Fine Arts Auditorium
- 1/15-1/16—Secondary Finals
- 1/17—Secondary Finals
End of Semester
Kindergarten—NO SCHOOL
Early Release (Gr. 1-12)
- 1/17—Board Meeting— 6 p.m.
- 1/18—**NO SCHOOL— (K-12)**
TEACHER IN-SERVICE
- 1/19—Ski Day—Pomerelle
- 1/19—Board of Directors—9-NOON
- 1/22—Winter Showcase (Gr. 7/8)
Rehearsal 3:30-5:00 p.m.
6:30-8:00 p.m.
- 1/26—Ski Day—Pomerelle

Courage cont.

Courage is the virtue that allows us to confront and to overcome our fears in order to do the right thing. Aristotle famously defined courage as the mean between foolhardiness and cowardice. The fanatic has no sense to fear; he throws caution to the wind and runs ahead into certain death or destruction. The coward, on the other hand, turns and runs whenever his objective becomes too difficult. The brave man swallows his fear, so to speak, and does what duty demands. Fear never disappears when danger looms. Rather, one must learn to control it. Before Aristotle, Plato offered a curious perspective on courage. He held that courage is the “ability to retain safely in all circumstances a judgment about what is to be feared.” In other words, the courageous man fears the right things. Elsewhere Plato demonstrates that for the guardians of the society death should not produce the greatest fear; failing in one’s duty should.

Winston Churchill, one of the bravest men in the history of Western civilization, grew up reading the biographies of courageous heroes, such as his ancestor the Duke of Marlborough, and memorizing heroic poetry, such as Shakespeare’s *Henry V* and these lines from Macaulay’s *Lays of Ancient Rome*:

*Then out spake brave Horatius,
The Captain of the Gate:
“To every man upon this earth
Death cometh soon or late.
And how can man die better
Than facing fearful odds,
For the ashes of his fathers,
And the temples of his gods?”*

A half-century later when civilization hung in the breach, and the resolve of many people, of entire nations, flagged and failed, Churchill did not lose his courage. When members of his War Cabinet were considering coming to terms with Hitler, Churchill responded vehemently, “If this long island story of ours is to end at last, let it end only when each one of us lies choking in his own blood upon the ground.” Thus the random readings of the boy can inspire the philosophic fortitude of the man.

Terrence Moore/Classical Writer

(Founding charter schools through Hillsdale College’s Barney Initiative)

FEBRUARY PILLAR OF THE MONTH

HONESTY — We never knowingly induce another to believe what is false. We are always truthful in what we say and do, regardless of the circumstances or consequences.

Jan. 7 — *“No legacy is so rich as honesty.”*

~William Shakespeare (b.1564-1616, English poet, playwright)

Jan. 14 — *“Whoever is careless with the truth in small matters cannot be trusted with important matters”*

~Albert Einstein (b.1879-1955, German-born physicist)

Jan. 21 — *“Honest people don’t hide their deeds.”*

~Emily Bronte, *Wuthering Heights* (b.1818-1848, English novelist, poet)

Jan. 28 — *“The very spring and root of honesty and virtue lie in good education.”* ~Plutarch (b.45-120 AD, Greek historian, essayist, biographer)

“For last year’s words belong to last year’s language and next year’s words await another voice. And to make an end is to make a beginning.”
— **T.S. Eliot**